

MILFORD PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING
September 17, 2013 Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room, 6:30 PM

Present:

Members:

Janet Langdell, Chairperson
Paul Amato
Kathy Bauer
Steve Duncanson
Tom Sloan
Judy Plant
Susan Robinson, Alternate

Staff:

Jodie Levandowski, Town Planner
Dan Finan, Videographer

Excused:

Chris Beer

MINUTES:

1. Approval of minutes from the 8/20/13 meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

2. **Great Bridge Properties – Capron Rd – Map 43, Lot 55 & 57;** Discussion on proposed conceptual design.

Chairperson Langdell called the meeting to order at 6:30PM. She then explained the process for the public hearing, introduced the Board and Staff and read the agenda.

MINUTES:

S. Duncanson made a motion to approve the minutes from the 08/20/13 meeting. P. Amato seconded. J. Plant abstained and all else in favor.

NEW BUSINESS:

Great Bridge Properties – Capron Rd – Map 43, Lot 55 & 57; Discussion on proposed conceptual design.

Chairperson Langdell recognized:

Chris Davies, Great Bridge Properties

Bill Castleton, Great Bridge Properties

Tony Basso, Project Engineer, Keach Nordstrom

Tom Lorden

Chris Davies introduced himself and his business partner Bill Castleton along with Tim Basso of Keach Nordstrom and Tom Lorden of Milford. C. Davies said Great Bridge specializes in affordable and workforce housing. We are long term owners and we have never sold any properties. We stay with them and make them part of the community. We would like to do some different things with this property including community gardens, walking trails, placards and fun and interesting things for the residents. We have no final details yet as we are still working on the engineering. C. Davies said we thought this was a good opportunity to present the plan to gather thoughts and comments at this stage.

T. Basso presented the plan and said this is a multi-family project consisting of five buildings three of them are proposed to be 30 units and two other buildings, one of 17 and one of 18 units consisting of the whole 125 units. The whole property is 25 acres bisected by a wetland near the first two buildings off of Capron Road we will have to cross that and are proposing to cross at the narrowest point. We will have a special exception from the Zoning Board to do that. We will also be bringing in public sewer and municipal water for this project we have already met with the water and sewer department to discuss that and how they would like to see it come in and have incorporated their thoughts in to this design. We have contacted a traffic consultant and will be beginning the traffic portion of this and we understand the Planning Board will want to evaluate that portion of the project.

T. Basso said the stormwater is going to be handled with as many innovative and small systems as possible through the development. The idea is to incorporate the systems into the walking trails on site. We want to encourage walking around site. Within one of the buildings there will be a recreation and fitness center and the buildings will be integrated.

T. Basso said the property is properly zoned for this and it does abut Route 101, we will stay away from that area as there is quite a bit of grade up to that. If you've been out to the site you will see the front part is a field we're going to use but we're also going to get into the woods on the other side of that initial wetland. We are moving forward with the design now and have met with Bill a few times already. We have architectural here and we will speak on that.

C. Davies explained that the first three buildings are designed like that as we wanted to try and break the buildings up a bit and have a little bit of a different design. We are excited to have an interior court yard. If we can do this I would love to do things like compost stations. The building themselves will be extremely green. Our last projects have been extremely green. We've done geothermal in the past and solar panels. C. Davies said this is really first class housing. As Tony said we will have community rooms and fitness rooms with equipment. We try to keep the tenants engaged and the more we do things like that the happier the tenant is and in turn they stay longer the more stable everything is. Being a Milford resident I am very familiar with the granite and quarries and history, this is something I would like to bring into the landscaping.

T. Basso said one other piece we would like to call your attention to is the parking requirement, 2 spaces per unit and we would like to do 1.5 that would require a waiver. Chris Davies owns ten other buildings and none of them require more than 1.5. We can get the 2 spaces. I can show a plan where we can get the 2 but we hope that the Board supports a plan with the 1.5. This plan that you see tonight shows the 1.5. C. Davies said I can demonstrate that with other properties and some of which are reasonably close to Milford. We developed a property in Jaffrey, the Mills right downtown which has been very successful. J. Langdell inquired if the Mill was all senior living. C. Davies responded no, it's a mix.

C. Davies went on to explain more recent projects Great Bridge has developed. One 99 unit building in Lunenburg, Mass. It's brand new and we just opened phase 2 of that. If anybody would like a tour I would be happy to take you down there to show you the building. J Langdell asked, do you have an example of workforce or affordable development that's using geothermal that you've done? C. Davies said yes, we have one in Conway, New Hampshire. That also has solar panels and it is a very green building. All our projects are in the energy star program and when we opened that building public service called and said we had the lowest rating of the year for that project. We would do as much green building as we can with this project.

P. Amato asked to build out this project how long would you say? C. Davies said it's hard to say, typically if we went using our affordable funding sources it would be quite a few years. If we find the market we can absorb some market rate units we might complete a little sooner. We would probably do this similar to our Lunenburg property and completed this over a few phases. P. Amato asked if you were to start with the buildings closest to 101A then I don't see another way to get construction equipment and vehicles up to build the ones higher on the hill without going right through the lower units. C. Davies said yes that is something we will have to work out.

T. Sloan asked regarding the future phases, you're exposing a lot of people to potentially backing traffic when their going through a gauntlet of parking areas to get to their units and that has the potential to cause problems and unwanted interactions. C. Davies said so noted and another very good point.

C. Davies gave an example of their Conway, NH project and spoke on the site layout, landscaping, demographics and residents.

S. Duncanson asked from Capron Road to the back units, how far is the extent of that road? J. Langdell stated they have two accesses off of Capron Road. C. Davies said these building will be fully sprinkled and have all the latest equipment. J. Plant asked will they be pet friendly. C. Davies said usually not. We have allowed cats in some instances but we have tried to stay away from dogs.

J. Langdell asked if the area mentioned for fitness room/recreation room is in one of the lower buildings. C. Davies said what we will probably do since the buildings will all be linked together we will probably do the community room in the first building and the community rooms we do are fantastic. They are large, they have a kitchen and seating area with tile floor and lots of tables and almost like a living room type set up with a large TV. That room will be available to the residence at no charge. The next building instead of doing that we will go the fitness route so people can use both buildings. J. Langdell asked if that is generally located in the center of the building. C. Davies said yes, along with management offices. J. Langdell asked does the center silo area of the building have any apartments in it. C. Davies said I don't believe so. C. Davies said each building will also have about 20 security cameras that will be online at all times.

K. Bauer stated coming down on to Capron Road going out on to Nashua Street which is one of our busiest streets in town and coming out where there's no signal there and as this comes out there will be a lot of concern about traffic there and the traffic is a concern to me. C. Davies said we will be addressing that.

P. Amato said I haven't been up there in a very long time but is there any way you can work with your neighbors at Woodland Heights to connect through their property to gain another way out? If you could get back to Capron Road from Woodland Heights it would give the whole thing a better flow. I see this as 50 apartments on a long dead-end road through parking lots. I would rather see you have a private road separate from the

parking lots as oppose to a road that goes through the parking lots up to the other apartments. C. Davies said that was a good point.

K. Bauer asked about the wetlands crossing and where that will be located.

J. Langdell asked about price point, what are your objectives in terms of price point for the apartments? B. Castleton stated a two bedroom unit will be in the range of low \$900's is where we are at. C. Davies said that includes heat and hot water. B. Castleton said something in the range that is 15% below the market. J. Langdell asked do you; in any of your other facilities accept Section 8 vouchers. C. Davies said yes and used example from the Conway, NH project.

J. Langdell asked about the architecture in regards to the private patios. C. Davies explained pocket patios and went over potential designs for the final phase of buildings. C. Davies explained that all units will be adaptable for handicap uses with grab bars and ramps. K. Bauer asked about elevators in buildings and if the back buildings will be handicap accessible. C. Davies, yes, 5% of every building we do have fully equipped handicap units. J. Langdell asked are these the architecturals you're going with. C. Davies said these are the basic building types we're going to use but we are open to suggestions.

C. Davies and B. Castleton discussed possible methods for central air conditioning and geothermal techniques.

J. Langdell thanked the presenters for coming in and there being no more questions made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:17pm. T. Sloan seconded and all in favor.

MINUTES OF THE SEP 17, 2013 PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING APPROVED NOV 19, 2013